



# Town of Royalston

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## Office of the Selectmen

PO Box 125  
13 On The Common  
Royalston, Massachusetts 01368

April 6, 2009

Luisa Paiewonsky, Commissioner  
Massachusetts Highway Department  
10 Park Plaza  
Suite 3170  
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Dear Commissioner Paiewonsky,

The 6.5 mile stretch of Route 32 that runs through Royalston has been described by MassHighway, State Reps, and local residents as, "The worst road in the district, perhaps in the State." The road surface is cleaved and delaminated. Drainage is non existent. Patching does not hold. Snow cannot be managed properly. These factors add up to a nearly impassable, dangerous road. Emergency vehicles and school busses are forced to a crawl. Students have been injured *inside* their school bus. Motorists are forced to the wrong side around dangerous corners to avoid potholes. Senator Stephen Brewer, who drives the road frequently, describes the road as the *worst* in his 29 town district. This road has not had any infrastructure improvements in more than 30 years.

Royalston has been aggressively preparing engineering plans for the rehabilitation of this roadway that links New Hampshire to Central Massachusetts. We have held to an accelerated schedule in getting this plan ready for construction. MassHighway has returned comments from the 75% plan submission and the 100% plan will be ready shortly. We will be ready to advertise in late summer 2009.

Last year, because of the regional support for the repair of this road, we were able to supersede another town on the 2009 TIP and reserve \$3.88 million in Federal and State funding. The latest cost estimates, by MassHighway costing techniques, put the project at \$4.8 million. Please understand this cost does not represent an extravagant new highway. The plans simply call for drainage reconstruction and surface rehabilitation in the existing footprint. We have scrutinized the costs. However, in order to meet the restrictions of the TIP funding we had no choice but to reduce the length of prospective work on the project by 1.2 miles.

Senator Brewer and Representative Rice were successful in demonstrating the need for this project to their colleagues when they secured an earmark of \$4.5 million in the 2008 Transportation Bond Bill last year.

I am fully aware that earmarks are fleeting and are often unfulfilled. However, I hope that you will recommend that the Central Massachusetts region be allowed to benefit from a fraction of this earmark. As little as \$900,000 can bridge the gap to restore this project to its full 6.5 mile scope. Because of the size of this project relative to the level of TIP funding and the number of other waiting projects, there is no chance of subsequent funding through the TIP. Royalston is a small town. The North Quabbin Region is rural. We typically use very little Federal or State dollars for road projects. We would like to do this project once, completely.

This project has regional support. Route 32 is a north-south corridor through the Quabbin Region, from New Hampshire to Connecticut. The Royalston section is the gateway into Massachusetts from New Hampshire. Access into North Central Massachusetts has been strangled by the condition of Route 32. Our neighbors, Athol and Winchendon, have taken the brunt of the diverted traffic and are keenly aware of the lack of road capacity. I have enclosed a letter of support from the Athol Board of Selectmen.

Route 32 runs along the top of Tully Dam in Royalston. The Army Corps of Engineers reports that, in spite of the road condition, this boating, hiking, and camping recreation area draws more than 68,000 visitors to the region annually. I have enclosed a letter from the ACOE which supports the project and lists the dangers to the public from the conditions near the dam.

As you can see, our project is well organized and supported. State Senators and Representatives, the Army Corps of Engineers, MassHighway, our neighboring communities, and local boards and residents, all support this project. Route 32 is a gateway to Central Massachusetts and the Tully Lake recreation area. The current road is dangerous and unrepairable. The rehabilitation plan is ready to go. We need your help to do this project right, and do it once. Please consider enabling supplemental funding for this project.

I would be happy to discuss this project in detail with you. Please contact me at the number below or at [awest-bos@royalston-ma.gov](mailto:awest-bos@royalston-ma.gov). Thank you very much for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew West". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Andrew West  
Selectman  
978-273-4573 cell  
978-249-5993 home

/encl.



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
NEW ENGLAND DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
696 VIRGINIA ROAD  
CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01742-2751

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

July 14, 2008

Construction – Operations Division

Royalston Board of Selectmen  
P.O. Box 125  
Royalston, MA 01368

Dear Board of Selectmen:

I am writing in support of your efforts to rehabilitate Route 32 in the Town of Royalston. Because Route 32 lies on the crest of Tully Dam, we have a keen interest in seeing the guardrails replaced for public safety. As you know, there have been multiple car accidents on the dam and the old guardrails are so deteriorated that they do not stop vehicles from crashing down the rock slopes of the dam. There have been three (3) such instances in the last three (3) years. The need for repair is urgent to prevent further serious accidents and injuries.

In addition to the guardrail safety issue, Route 32 is also one of the main roads for public access to the Tully Lake Recreation Area. The rehabilitation of Route 32 will improve the quality of access to this federal recreation area for thousands of visitors. In fiscal year 2007, Tully Lake received an estimated 68,220 visits for activities such as camping, picnicking, hiking, boating, fishing, disc golf, geocaching, and nature study.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If there are any questions, you can reach me at 978-318-8321 or by email at [richard.c.carlson@usace.army.mil](mailto:richard.c.carlson@usace.army.mil).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Richard C. Carlson", is positioned above the typed name.

Richard C. Carlson PE, CCM  
Chief, Construction – Operations Division

Copy Furnished:  
Operations Manager, Lower Connecticut River Basin

RECEIVED MAY 5 2008



## TOWN OF ATHOL

### Selectmen

Alan D. Dodge  
Anthony A. Brighenti  
Wayne E. Miller, M.D.  
Joseph F. Maga  
Phillip D. King

584 Main Street  
Athol, MA 01331  
Telephone 978-249-2368 \* Fax 978-249-4960

David B. Ames  
Town Manager

Heather J. Brissette  
Administrative Assistant

April 17, 2008

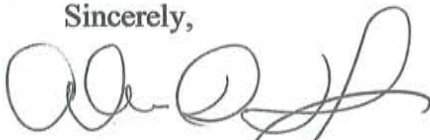
Montachusett Regional Planning Commission  
R1427 Water Street  
Fitchburg, MA 01420

Dear MRPC,

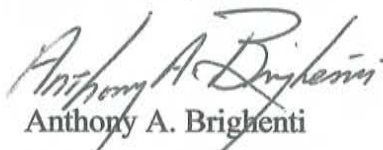
It is with great enthusiasm that the Town of Athol writes this support letter for Route 32 TIP funding in the Town of Royalston. This road is heavily used by residents of the Town of Athol and by service vehicles serving the residents of the Town of Athol. The road is in terrible shape and is getting worse each year.

Route 32 has a regional economic impact to the entire North Quabbin area. We strongly encourage MRPC to expedite TIP funding for this project.

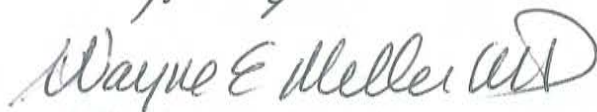
Sincerely,



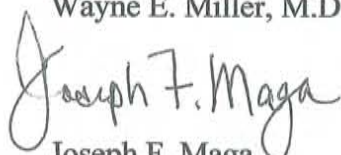
Alan D. Dodge, Chairman



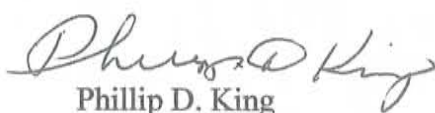
Anthony A. Brighenti




Wayne E. Miller, M.D.



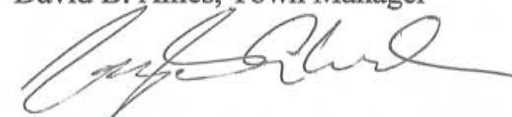
Joseph F. Maga



Phillip D. King



David B. Ames, Town Manager



Douglas Walsh, DPW Superintendent